



Benenden Magazine
April 2017



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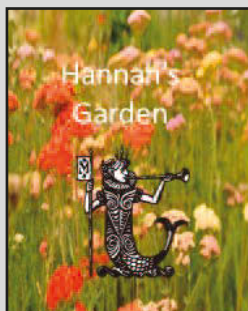
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Editorial



As you may imagine hardly a day - nay barely an hour - passes without a flurry of emails between the Magazine's editorial staff discussing some vital point of style or grammar. This month much of the debate has been around nomenclature and capitalization, Charles Trollope's Bird Notes from Namibia (pages 32-33) raised the question of whether, in these days of political correctness, "game" or "big game" remained an appropriate appellation for wild animals. Most dictionary definitions suggest that 'game' refers to animals that can be or are shot for sport. Which is somewhat at odds with wildlife conservation and protection of endangered species. Nevertheless trips in the reserves to see the animals are commonly referred to as 'gamedrives'. So should we eschew the term 'game' altogether and always refer to them as animals, or wild animals, or wildlife? Either way it's a fascinating account of what was clearly an amazing trip.

On the question of appellations, Tracy Claridge's wine column (pages 30-31) looks at the Languedoc and how to distinguish between AOC, IGP and VDP abbreviations on the label. It's not as dry as it sounds! Tracy, along with another 35 of us, sampled a good selection of one Languedoc domain's wines at the Benenden's Community Shop wine tasting evening. As ever he gives us a good steer of what to buy.

Back to birds and we've added a bird-watcher's guide to Jim Hyde's 'Foot Note' walks (pages 35-36) which we think will be interesting and informative. When I say "we" what I really mean is that Charles Trollope has. So in a bid to stay on his good side, I hereby publically apologise for any and all changes I've made to his copy!

Kent Barker, Co-Editor

The Benenden Magazine is published monthly as a joint venture by Benenden Parish Council and St George's Parochial Church Council. It is distributed free to all residents of the parish. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the publishers. Responsibility for accuracy of information rests with contributors and advertisers. Neither the publishers nor the editors shall be held responsible for or endorse any opinions, products or services printed in the magazine or directory.

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Church Calendar

St George's Church

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 david@dc-uk.co.uk (day off: Thursday)

Churchwarden: Tracy Claridge 240454 TLClaridge@TLClaridge.co.uk

Churchwarden: Julia Collard 241944 Julia.collard@btinternet.com

www.benendenchurch.org 850849 benendenchurch@gmail.com

Please inform the Rector or Churchwardens if you, or anyone else, is ill or would like a visit or home communion.

Sunday 2 April	8am Communion	10am All-age Eucharist and Sunday School	5pm Choral Evensong
Palm Sunday 9 April	8am 1662 Communion followed by breakfast	10am Morning Worship	5pm Evening Prayer at Mission Church
Monday 10 April			7.30pm Reflective Service
Tuesday 11 April			7.30pm Reflective Service
Wednesday 12 April			7.30pm Reflective Service
Maundy Thursday 13 April			7.30pm Communion
Good Friday 14 April		10am An Hour at the Cross	
Holy Saturday 15 April			7.30pm Reflective service
Easter Sunday 16 April	5.40am Sunrise Service, at St Nicholas Church, Sandhurst		
	8am Communion	10am Sung Eucharist	4pm Messy Church
Sunday 23 April	8am Communion	10am Morning Worship	5pm Praise Service at Mission Church
Sunday 30 April	8am Benefice Communion	10am Benefice All-age Communion, at St Nicholas Church, Sandhurst	

Mission Church, Sandhurst

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Every Tuesday 10am Communion

Iden Green Congregational Church

Pastor: Rev Peter Michell 240642 www.idengreen.org.uk

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

The Roman Catholic Chapel

Fr Barry Grant 713364 www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

From the Parish Registers

Baptism 26 March Phoebe Brown

Funerals 7 March Cecelia Kayacan Funeral and burial

29 March Geoff James Funeral

30 March Mary Hill Funeral and burial

Rector's Letter



Celebrate this Easter - Christ is risen

Wow, isn't this a beautiful time of year, but also such a busy time of year? So much to do outdoors as the garden comes back into colour and into life. No doubt there will be others planning on work inside the home too - as long lists of jobs are drawn up. In the last couple of letters I've encouraged folk to try and step back from all the 'busyness' that we inflict upon ourselves, and use this time of Lent to more quietly reflect on life - and on God.

In some ways though I am also saying, "Don't do as I do; do as I would like to do" - for this is probably a priest's busiest time of year: the run up to Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter. So as I encourage you to reflect and take some time out of the busyness, priests everywhere are ramping up preparing many services. And what a privilege it is to do this, for this is the most important time in the church year; reflecting through Lent, then ready for the joy of Easter.

Why not come and join us this year during Holy Week or on Easter Sunday? There is certainly a lot to choose from. We begin with the celebration of Palm Sunday (9 April): there is a breakfast served in the Memorial Hall between the 8am and 10am services; and a procession from the Memorial Hall to St George's ready for the start of the 10am service. Then through Holy Week, there is Morning Prayer at 8am, and a Reflective service at 5pm in the Mission Church in Sandhurst or 7.30pm in St George's on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Maundy Thursday there's a service at the Cathedral at 11am, and a Communion service at St George's, for the benefice, at 7.30pm. Good Friday (14 April) we have "An Hour at the Cross" service at 10am; on Holy Saturday, Easter Eve, there is another Reflective service at St George's.

Then we have the joy and celebration of Easter Day! And it starts early in the benefice: come along to an outdoor service at St Nicholas Church, Sandhurst for a sunrise service starting at 5.40am! It is beautiful seeing the sun rise across the marshes as we begin celebrating Easter together. Then warm up with tea/coffee and a bacon butty at the Mission Church! We then move on to an 8am Communion, a 10am Eucharist, and finish off the celebrations with Messy Church at 4pm; like I said: choice, lots of choice!

Please do not be so busy this Easter time to miss out on the joy and celebration, and the beauty of this time of year. God, who loves you so much he sent his Son to die for you, raises his Son to life. Let's celebrate that together. Happy Easter.

Revd David Commander, Rector

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Just a Thought



Midwives

It has been fascinating watching 'Call the Midwife'. I have enjoyed the series for itself but it also makes me think - 'that was happening in my lifetime.' People had those attitudes to a husband's involvement in childbirth - or lack of; the thalidomide issue; the prevalence of home births; behaviour between courting couples; the poor family living conditions; the personal care of the midwives and so on. But it also set me thinking about midwives themselves and the fact that their kind play a role in every culture and in every country, and must have been in existence throughout the centuries, including two thousand years ago.

The young woman ran in to the courtyard very upset, calling to the old lady sitting in the sheltered corner. 'Have you heard - they crucified that Jesus. It doesn't seem right. He only did good from what I could tell. But you don't know these days, things are so tricky and dangerous especially if you speak out.'

'Oh no they haven't have they! What a strange end to the tale.'

'What do you mean, mother?' the young woman asked.

'Well I remember him some thirty years ago when I was a trainee midwife.'

'You knew his mother - really?' exclaimed her daughter.

'No, no. But I lived in Bethlehem then. It was the time of the census and there were lots of strangers around. This couple turned up in the town and she was just at her due date. My friend's husband was an innkeeper and their place was full. They were that busy my friend was just about run off her feet. But her husband took pity on the couple and found somewhere out at the back for them, away from all the hustle and bustle. The young girl had the baby but my friend was too busy to help, so she sent a message to me to see if I could check everything was OK as the girl seemed so young and innocent and with no family support.' She paused remembering.

'It was a little boy and all seemed well - amazingly well in fact. There was a lovely atmosphere about the place, simple as it was. I remember that particularly.'

'Then what happened?' asked the daughter.

'Oh I had to go and get on with other things, but I have never forgotten that night and I have followed news of him on and off especially during this last few years. I even heard him speak once.'

'I wish I had. It is so sad and cruel.'

'You know something,' her mother replied, 'I have an odd feeling that somehow today is not the end of him.'

Not completely impossible!

Sue Fisher

Village Calendar

March

Saturday 25 Iden Green and Benenden WI, Coffee Morning, Memorial Hall, 10-12noon

April

Tuesday 4 Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Memorial Hall, 7.30pm

Thursday 6 Planning Committee Meeting, Memorial Hall, 8.30am

Saturday 8 Benenden Bowls Club, Coffee Morning, Memorial Hall, 10am

Saturday 8 Corn Hole tossing, St George's Club, 8.15pm

Monday 10 Parish Council Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 7.30pm

Thursday 13 Benenden Women's Club, Family Law & Mediation, Iden Green Pavilion, 7.30pm

p.23

Friday 14 Easter Draw and Meat Raffle, St George's Club, 8.15pm

Sunday 16 Messy Church, St George's Church, 4-6pm

p.17

Tuesday 18 Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm

p.23

Tuesday 18 Iden Green and Benenden WI, Fish and Ships, Memorial Hall, 2pm

Wednesday 19 Benenden Engineering Society meeting, The Bull, 8pm

Friday 21 Annual General Meeting, St George's Club, 8.30pm

Saturday 22 Spring Barbecue, St George's Club, 8.15pm

Sunday 23 The Great Benenden Bake-Off, Benenden School, 10.30-2pm

p.9

Tuesday 25 Merry and Bright, Memorial Hall, 3pm

Sunday 30 Benenden Engineering Society visit to Crossness Pumping Station

May

Friday 5 Woodland Wide Games, Iden Green Congregational Church, 7pm

Saturday 13 Benenden Charity Cricket Match, The Green, 2pm

p.21

Sunday 14 Christian Aid Week

p.21

Friday 26 Wines for Summer Drinking, Benenden's Community Shop, 7.30pm

p.31

Benenden Youth Club/Streetcruizer, age 11+

Mondays at Benenden Village Hall, 7-9pm

Coffee Shop

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-12noon

Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

Fridays during term time in St George's Church, 9-11.30am

Refuse Lorry Collections

Saturday 8 April, Domestic Waste, Iden Green, crossroads, 8-11am

Saturday 22 April, Garden Waste/Compostable Waste, Iden Green, crossroads, 8-11am

Parish Council



So we have had our Council Tax bills dropping through our letterboxes. The percentage increase for the coming year is not huge - 3.6% - but the total sum is quite considerable. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council collects these taxes which are made up of our own Parish Precept, the Borough's share, that of KCC, and also subventions to the Police and Fire Services. The largest element is KCC (75%) and the smallest is BPC (3%).

But how is all this calculated? Each body puts together a budget with estimates of the total sum needed to fund its activities. This is all fed into the computer in Tunbridge Wells to determine the cost per household. However there are complications. The number of dwellings may have changed, or homes may have been extended which moves them to a higher tax band. From this information a new tax base is calculated with eight tax bands, A to H. They're based on 1991 property prices and there are currently no plans to update this. In order to complete the calculation it is all done based on tax band D. The tax band for A is half that of D, while H is double and so on. The computer calculates all this and comes up with your tax bill.

In the case of Benenden Parish, we need to increase our expenditure by nearly 2% to £39,530, but, with some new houses, this is spread over more households, so the Parish Precept for each household is actually slightly lower this time - the only element in your tax bill that is.

A separate element of "local" taxation is the controversial National Non Domestic Rate (NNDR), more commonly called the Business Rate, introduced in 1988 and based on the rental value of commercial premises. This is also collected by TWBC but from our local businesses, and currently totals a whopping £55.2 million a year for the Government. Only a very small element is returned to the Borough (£2.2 million) and a larger element to County. Our Parish gets nothing!

Unfortunately we do not know where the rest goes. It all vanishes into a central pot. Some will go to the Highways Agency (good old A21!) while other sums are given to other local authorities elsewhere in the country. It is not a transparent process. I think that we should be told where our money is going, particularly as businesses face significant increases. It's especially so in this part of the country where property prices, and therefore rental values, are higher. This must now be a real worry for our local businesses and so for us all.

Peter Davies, BPC Chairman
01580 240723 chairbenendenpc@gmail.com

Caroline Levett, Benenden Parish Council Clerk
01580 240371 clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org
For more information see our website www.benendenparishcouncil.org or find us on facebook

Parish Council Meeting
Monday 10 April 2016, Iden Green Pavilion,
7.30pm

Planning Committee Meeting
Thursday 6 April 2016, Memorial Hall, 8.30am

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News and Events

News from Benenden School

We are all still celebrating after our 1st team won the Rathbones National Schools Lacrosse Championships after a dramatic two days of competition at Guildford's Surrey Park.

This is an amazing achievement and the whole school is overjoyed at their success. My congratulations go to all the girls and staff whose hard work has contributed to this triumph. Benenden's 2nd team also enjoyed success, finishing third in their competition.

The weekend of celebration was topped off by a stunning performance by our Chapel Choir at the Chapel of The Queen's College, Oxford. They performed the new setting of Stabat Mater, the piece we commissioned in 2015 and which became our first commercial CD release.

At the time of writing, we are about to launch into our inaugural Phone Fast - in which girls will live for three days without mobiles and social media.

The Phone Fast has been introduced as part of measures to raise awareness among girls and parents of the risks that social media presents to the wellbeing of young people. Staff will also be invited to take part if they wish.

The initiative was developed in partnership with a group of Sixth Formers, who asked senior management and their boarding staff how they could encourage pupils to reduce, and manage more effectively, their mobile phone use.

I have no doubt that, as the Phone Fast becomes a reality, girls' initial shock at the prospect of being without their phones will be replaced by a determination to adjust - and ultimately to make the most of their spare time without the distraction of phones, with a party and, in true Benenden fashion, 'Phone Cake' to look forward to at the end!

Samantha Price, Headmistress

THE BENENDEN ARTS FESTIVAL

Benenden residents are welcome to come & watch The Great Benenden Bake-Off judged by Marcus Wareing at Benenden School

Sunday 23 April 2017
10.30am-2pm

No need to RSVP, just turn up on the day.



BENENDEN

Church Maintenance and 20-20 Project

Following the inspection in 2015, stonemasons are due to start work on the outside fabric of St George's, immediately after Easter.

The work is expected to take up to ten weeks. Scaffolding will be needed for a short time at both east and west elevations, but the remainder will be reached by a scaffold tower which will be assembled daily and parked in a secure compound adjacent to the south door. By this means unsightly works are going to be kept to a minimum, and normal church routine should not be greatly affected.

20-20: The Archdeacon has granted his Licence to enable Phase I of the St George's 20-20 Project to proceed. This involves opening up the rear of the church for an 15-month trial period. In the coming weeks the two pew frontals at the back of the church will be removed, the centre aisle at the west end brought up to the same level as the rear plinths, and the eight rear pews removed and stored. This is to enable the back of church to be used more flexibly for existing activities and worship, and for other events and social events in the future.

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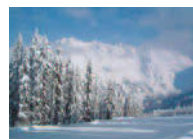
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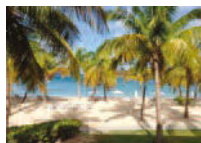
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Benenden Village Church Fete - fun and frolics

Saturday 24 June, The Green, 12-4pm

The village Green on Saturday 24 June will be full of fun and frolics so make sure to put it in your diary. Alongside the stalls - traditional favourites and new - we are excited to welcome some new activities in our central show arena and in the skies above! (More details in the next edition). While the children play in the Kid's Corner, dance around the Maypole, ride ponies and are on the Bouncy Castle - you can browse the stalls, explore the Classic Car Display, bid on the Silent Auction, sample the BBQ, Beer or Cream Tea while listening to our talented Ukelele Band. New this year is the Fancy Dress Dog Show. So start planning outfits now and convince your dog that this is a good idea!

NEW TIME: We have changed the fete times this year. It will now start at midday so you can enjoy a BBQ lunch and will end at 4pm to give everyone more time to enjoy themselves.

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www.helengrant.org

Produced by Helen Grant MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA



Talking Shop

DAVID COMMANDER ON VOLUNTEERING IN BENENDEN'S COMMUNITY SHOP

'Why do I volunteer in the shop?' Revd David asks with a rhetorical grin. It is plain he knows clearly what his reasons are. 'It gives me a chance to do something for the community outside of the church and the friendly environment in the café allows me to have easy, natural conversations with people'.

This could have been any of the volunteers speaking because the shop atmosphere promotes an ease of communication which has proved to be a real source of delight. For David it is a way to show how approachable he is - just an ordinary guy despite the dog-collar - while dressed in an apron sweeping floors and serving customers.

David happily responds to anyone who asks him if he has a couple of minutes to spare. Some wondered if given his busy schedule, he would have the time to devote to this perhaps mundane task.

But, he assures me, he would always make time. Apart from a penchant for fruit cake and scones, he explains that volunteering enables him to connect with the wider community in a refreshingly informal way. And David speaks of a clergyman friend of his, who, for similar reasons, has volunteered to work in a butcher's shop in his village.

How lucky are we to have the facility of the shop and café in Benenden; a place to shop, eat, relax and have fun! David explains that, in one afternoon, he was asked three times if he was a real vicar, indicating perhaps that the ambience in Benenden's enables people to feel comfortable enough to say what is on their minds. With Easter approaching, David will be busier than ever, yet, apart from Holy Week, you will still find him in the café on a Wednesday afternoon, willing to serve and chat. If any others are thinking of volunteering but haven't done so yet, maybe it's time to take the plunge. Like David, you won't regret it!

Bev Beveridge



Jobcentre Closure

Citizen's Advice is appealing to people in Benenden and throughout the Borough to oppose the closure of the Tunbridge Wells Jobcentre. In a statement they said: "Citizens Advice Tunbridge Wells & District believes that closure of the Jobcentre will create further hardship and difficulties for people in the Borough and for those in rural areas who already struggle to attend the Jobcentre in Tunbridge Wells. We feel residents would be greatly disadvantaged without the Jobcentre maintaining at least an ongoing presence in Tunbridge Wells, preferably in addition to a further presence in the east of the Borough, for example in Cranbrook."

They are appealing for people who will be personally affected by the closure to contact them, and promise all information will be treated anonymously and in confidence. They would also like to hear from organisations or individuals who could support their campaign to prevent the closure. Please contact on: 714936 advice@advice@catwd.org.uk

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Spring term at Benenden CE Primary School

The spring term has been an exciting one at school and I cannot believe we are galloping towards the Easter break at such speed.

Children in Years 5 and 6 represented the school at the annual swimming gala, held at Benenden Girls School in January. The team were thrilled to come first in the small schools category and brought the cup back to Benenden, where it has lived for the past 12 years.

Congratulations to Thomas, Dillon, Jess, Beth, Ned, Oliver, Rory, Jon, Megan, Katie and Lara for their brilliant performance in the pool.

Pupils have also represented us in New Age Kurling - a form of the original curling game, adapted so that it can be played indoors rather than on ice - and hockey competitions with other local schools. We are grateful to Mrs Kerr and Mrs Maskell for planning these events.

Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils chose one of the first sunny days of spring for their annual welly walk. They have been learning about the seasons and this local adventure gave them plenty of first-hand experience of the signs of spring.

Continuing our drive to encourage all pupils to enjoy reading, we welcomed Mrs Swan and her dog Archie into school as part of the Pets as Therapy programme. Children have the opportunity to read to Archie each week and this encourages them to develop their reading skills and increase their confidence. Archie, for his part, enjoys listening to all kinds of stories.

The children also worked hard to raise £244 for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children after a visit from Andrea, who explained their work to the children in a special assembly. This was followed by workshops for all children to help them understand how to keep themselves safe.

Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have thoroughly enjoyed learning to speak Mandarin and finding

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Finally we'll sit down and eat a meal together.

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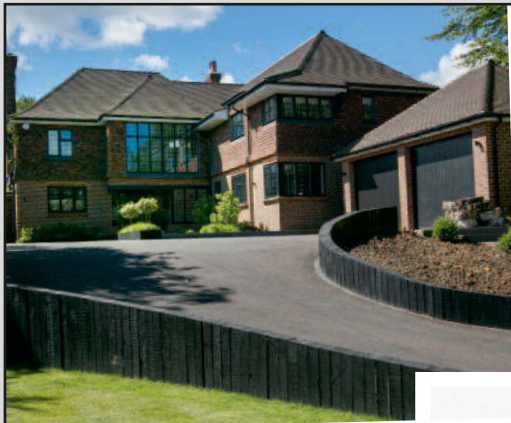
Rev'd David Commander, Rector
01580 240658 david@dc-uk.co.uk

out about Chinese culture. We are indebted to Miss Wang, who comes from Tenterden each week to work with those in Oak and Hawthorn classes.

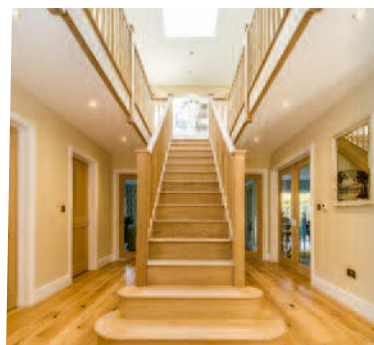
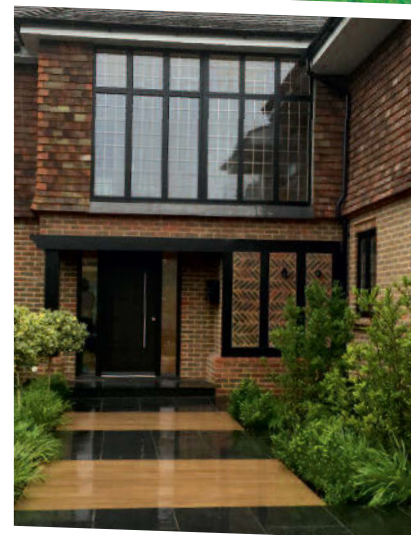
We have welcomed a number of new families to the school since Christmas and the children in Years 1, 2 and 4 have all settled in well.

At the time of writing, we are very much looking forward to an Easter bonnet parade on the penultimate day of term and our Easter service before we break up for a welcome holiday.

Gill Knox, Headteacher



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Ploughshares to Swords - the local iron industry

Walking through our gentle woods on a beautiful spring day, admiring carpets of bluebells and soft light, it is hard to imagine they were once centres of intense industry; fierce heat, billowing smoke, and the loud ringing of hammer blows.

Iron has played an important part in the Wealden economy for thousands of years, making anything from ploughs to weapons, long before the Romans arrived and took control of this once local industry.

The nearest Romano-British site is close by at Rolvenden Layne, levelled in the 1960s. Just a few small pieces of slag are left on the surface after the field was cultivated. Access was via the Newmill Channel - high tides reached as far as Rolvenden Station. Flat bottomed boats brought in supplies to feed gangs of workers as well as taking away the consolidated blooms. These probably went to Beauport Park, near Battle, a vast 5 hectare site with its own military style bath-house dating to the 2nd and 3rd Century. Another site excavated by Henry Cleere is at Bardown, near Ticehurst, accessed via the Rother to the south. Little Farningham Farm on the road to Golford was a Roman administration area. Full details of these sites and many more can be found on the Wealden Iron Research Group website.

The furnaces built of sandy clay are called bloomeries. The iron ore from local quarries was brought on site and broken up with hammers, roasted in pits, broken up again and layered 50/50 with charcoal then heated in the furnaces to 1200 degrees C. until a bloom of iron/slag mix was formed and waste slag flowed away from a hole in the front of the furnace and discarded. It is these lumps of slag, with jagged edges resembling clinker from a coal fire grate, that are pointers to a bloomery site. It is usually found down the banks of streams or in streams close to the old bloomery platforms and if you know what you are looking for, it is surprising how much you will find. The bloom was then consolidated by hammers and constant reheating to white heat to eject the slag and shape it into a rectangular billet immediately on removal from the furnace. This was the raw material used by the blacksmith to make ploughshares, horseshoes and weapons, but not guns. They were cast from the next generation technology. "The Blast Furnace".

Today all that can be seen of this once vital industry is quarries and pits dotted throughout the Weald where the iron ore was mined. Field and wood names from old maps and deeds are a good indication of the activity that took place there. Hence 'Minespots' indicates a pit where ore was mined, 'mine' was the name used for ore, not a hole in the ground as used today. There are three known sites in Benenden - one is upstream



of the Roman culvert in Willards Wood with two others close by.

By 1500 the process was being superseded by the blast furnace, brought in from France and the Low Countries. These produced molten cast iron. The nearest blast furnace site was at Hawkhurst, with two in Lamberhurst. These needed a good supply of water to drive the 10ft diameter overshot water wheels that worked the enormous board bellows to provide a constant stream of air.

Ashburnham, the last working blast furnace, closed in 1813. The industry had been dying in the locality for some time - the woodland required for making charcoal had been denuded, such was the voracious demands of the blast furnaces and forges. Also, coke became cheaper than charcoal. Hence, the industry moved north to Shropshire and places like the Forest of Dean.

Please contact me if you would like to know more or visit these sites.

Victor Kellett 240309





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Letter to the Editor

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THE STREET LIGHTING DEBATE

I like the dark. It's mysterious. It's romantic. It's evocative yet restful. It's the antidote we want the countryside to be. Animals like the dark. They don't like it to be light when it's meant to be dark. That said, the randy fox comment alluded to in the street lighting debate in the March Mag is without doubt apocryphal. Mischief-making? Surely not!

However, unlike randy foxes, I've a feeling there aren't too many muggers in Benenden; and besides, these days muggers do their thing in broad daylight almost as readily as at night. In any case, spending time fearing things that haven't come to pass isn't healthy, or logical. If you want something to be scared of, concentrate your efforts on the traffic; the chances of a vehicle careering off the road in Benenden are much, much greater (as those poor Wards will attest) than the chances of being mugged - but we don't walk around the village consciously in fear of the next occurrence. Do we? Well I don't.

I mean ... those daft signs down on the Rother at Newenden (and elsewhere) warning us to be terrified of things that haven't happened yet: "The following hazards are present in this area" etc - things that sensible people don't need to be told about; things that haven't resulted in misfortune afflicting a single solitary individual within living memory. It's an industry that depends on creating illusions. Don't be fooled.

For heaven's sake (geddit?) keep the lights off: I carry a torch and (final pun coming up) I count my lucky stars (because it's still possible to see them) that I live here rather than there (Croydon, Maidstone, Ashford etc - fully lit, in all their glory, all the time.) Excuse the cheesy puns.
Clive Illman, Iden Green

Editor's Note: The 'randy fox' comment was contained in an actual objection lodged with TWBC at the time of the Tennis Club lighting proposal.

BENENDEN'S CHARITY CRICKET MATCH

Saturday 13 May 2017

2-5pm

on The Green

Benenden Pre-School and Primary School parents
versus Benenden Cricket Club.

The match will be a 20/20 format.
All players will bat, bowl and field - and there will be a run limit,
to keep spirited competition to within healthy perimeters!

Family-friendly stalls - cakes and sweets,
face painting, bar and BBQ.

Proceeds will go to the Pre-School, the Primary School
and the Cricket Club.

For information please contact: events@benendenpreschool.co.uk

Christian Aid Week 2017

Sunday 14 May to Saturday 20 May

This year's Christian Aid Week will take place from Sunday 14 May to Saturday 20 May. The charity has been supporting refugees since 1945 when it was launched and the refugee crisis is every bit as challenging today.

Our collectors, wearing their official badges, will be posting appeal envelopes through letterboxes from 14 May onwards. It is hoped Benenden/Iden Green residents will give as generously as in the past - a record £4,013.20 was raised in 2016 - so that Christian Aid can continue its vital work of helping those struggling to survive and feed their families. Thank you in advance for your support.
Lesley Attwood, local Christian Aid Organiser

Spick-and-span in spring

If Benenden was looking a little smarter last month it was because of the annual Spring Clean organised by the Parish Council. This year's team of 19 litter pickers, an increase of one on last year, yomped the streets picking up everything from cigarette packets to a dozen pairs of shoes dumped in a sack in Chapel Lane - and received free tea and cake at Benenden's.



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CHRISTOPHER DANCE

Refreshments before the concert

Retiring collection in support of the work
of the Friends of St Dunstan's

Benenden Women's Club

We were joined on 9 March by David Clarke who has written a number of books about Wealden walks, mostly culminating at a local hostelry. David gave us a fascinating insight into the history of the area and predominantly described walks from Bodiam to Sissinghurst and on to Scotney and Bateman's. David is very knowledgeable, and we had a most interesting evening.

Our next meeting will take place at 7.30pm on 13 April in the Iden Green Pavilion when we will be joined by Juliet Franklin and Mary Raymond who will talk on family law and mediation, and all are welcome.

Ruth Barwick 242852

Benenden Pre-School News

At Pre-School, the children love nothing more than to create cards and gifts for loved ones at home, especially for Mother's Day, when they baked and hand-decorated delicious biscuits - and no doubt took great pleasure in presenting them to their family.

Easter is just around the corner, and we will be focusing on eggs: why some eggs float and others don't, what the difference is between brown and white eggs and, of course, holding our own Easter egg hunt in the garden. The children are likely hoping to hunt for the chocolate variety, not real eggs, however ...!
www.benendenpreschool.co.uk

Village Lunch

Tuesday 18 April, Benenden Village Hall,
12.30pm

All welcome - £4 a head. If you need a lift please let us know and we can arrange it. Please contact Genevieve on 01580 240526 if you haven't already put your name down but would like to come. We look forward to seeing you.

Local Bridge Players

Would you like to join us? A knowledge of basic Acol is necessary, improvers welcome, both clubs are friendly and provide tea and biscuits.

Rubber Bridge is held on Thursdays, 2-5pm, in Memorial Hall, Benenden.

For more information please contact:

Lesley Attwood 01580 243318 or

Anne Tylden-Wright 01580 850281.

Chicago is held on Mondays, 2-5pm, in Mission Church, Back Road, Sandhurst.

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Hospice in the Weald

Wine Tasting - Grape Varieties of the World
Saturday 6 May, St Mildred's Church Hall,
Tenterden, 7pm

Led by Tracy Claridge, this is always great fun and Tracy's knowledge is amazing. We shall be tasting eight wines and there will be a two-course meal, for just £25. Tickets are already selling, so please book a table for up to six through me, Jenny Stevens on 01580 388831 or Jenny.tenterden@gmail.com.

Some future events, more details to follow:

Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 June

Teas at Charlotte Molesworth's Open Studios

Thursday 8 June

Tea at Three at Harmsworth Court

Sunday 18 June

Open Gardens, Mockbeggar Lane

Friday 18 August

Garden Evening at Moonrakers, Mockbeggar Lane

We are so grateful for fundraising from two recent events. The Hawkhurst Rotary club raised funds of around £2,000 showing Mamma Mia at the Kino in Hawkhurst. In March Tracy Claridge organised a wine tasting at Benenden's Community Shop raising £151 in the raffle. The government provides less than 10% of the £7 million needed each year to keep Hospice in the Weald running. Your support makes all the difference.

Jenny Stevens, Friends Co-ordinator

Jane's Kitchen

Definitely an upgrade on condensed cream of mushroom soup from your childhood!

CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP

Serves 8

120ml + 2tbsp olive oil divided
900g chestnut mushrooms, cut into bite sized pieces
1 bay leaf and 3 sprigs of thyme
4 medium shallots, chopped
1 large leek light green & white parts only, thinly sliced
50g unsalted butter
2 garlic cloves, crushed
80ml dry white wine
170g plain flour
2½ pint chicken stock
350ml double cream
350ml full cream milk
Salt and freshly ground pepper

METHOD

- Heat 6tbsp oil in a large pot over a medium/high heat.
- Cook mushrooms for 3-4min until browned underneath, toss and continue to cook, tossing occasionally, until browned on both sides and tender, 4-5min more.
- Season with salt and pepper and transfer to a medium bowl.
- Heat same pot over a medium heat, add butter to the pan, add shallots, leek and garlic, stirring occasionally until vegetables are softened and not browned - 4-6min.
- Add wine and cook for 2-3min stirring until liquid is evaporated.
- Stir in flour and cook for about a minute, until vegetables are coated.
- Stir in stock, cream and milk, bring to the boil, add the bay leaf, 3 thyme sprigs and mushrooms plus any accumulated juices.
- Simmer uncovered for 25-35min until soup thickens to a heavy cream consistency.
- Remove thyme, bay leaf and check seasoning.

Jane Drysdale 291027

drysdale@bishopsdaleoast.co.uk



The Village Debates

Footpaths and access to the countryside

Access to miles of footpaths and bridleways is all very well but if they are overgrown, the stiles rickety or the gates too heavy to open and close easily, are people deterred from walking them? If stiles were replaced by 'kissing gates' would that encourage more people to use the paths? Or is rough grass and mud always going to be too much of a challenge for young children or the elderly?

Local farmers seem generally relaxed about people walking their land but have concerns about litter, gates being left open and dogs who might worry sheep, resulting in warning notices on some footpaths. Sticking to the footpath during your walk can be tricky if there are no signs and better signing of footpaths seems to be something everyone agrees on.

Minnie Garnier, Co-Editor

THE FOOTPATH CO-ORDINATOR VIEW

In the parish, we are fortunate to have a good network of public footpaths covering 27½ miles, mainly these are in good condition and are well used by locals and visitors alike. Walking is good exercise and visiting the



countryside gives people insight into the working and management of the land. Visitors to the area use the footpaths for recreation and add to the local economy through

spending in shops, cafés, and pubs.

Unless there is an agreement with KCC it is the landowner's responsibility to maintain paths, gates, bridges, and stiles on their land. Good quality and well maintained gates and stiles make it easier for the public to cross land. Clear signage marking the route of a path is the best way of keeping walkers on the right route.

Ideally all stiles around the village would be replaced by gates, the Hole Park Estate has replaced all, or nearly all, stiles on footpaths crossing the estate with gates making it easy to walk there. Stiles should be easy to navigate and also be regularly inspected to ensure they are fit for purpose as walkers have been known to prosecute landowners for injuries incurred on faulty stiles.

Jim Hyde

A FAMILY'S VIEW

We do a lot of walking and think the walks round here are brilliant. The children enjoy climbing over the stiles and don't find them offputting. Even the dog generally gets through, though occasionally has to be lifted over. I think sometimes the walk is hard to find so I'd be in favour of better signing but generally speaking the benchmark is pretty high. I think we are lucky to have so many great walks to do.

The Hagan family, three children aged 4, 6 & 9

A FARMER'S VIEW

Most farms have a footpath or two crossing their land, and on the land we farm we are criss-crossed with footpaths, as we lie between Benenden and Iden Green. In times gone by these would have been essential for people to get to work and visit family and friends. These paths are now mostly for recreation, and I do enjoy chatting to walkers, and most are respectful of the countryside. I do sadly come across a few problems, such as gates left open, which can lead to me tearing my hair out when two separate mobs of sheep are mixed. I am grateful to dog walkers who pick up their dog mess, but then when the bag is flung into the hedge, any remaining hair is plucked from my scalp! The obvious bane to every farmer are dogs off the lead amongst livestock. If in doubt, look up the countryside code online to learn how to enjoy the wonderful countryside we live in.

Tobin Bird, Farmer

NEVER TOO OLD

We walk a lot sometimes on the road but also make a great deal of use of the footpaths. We're not put off by mud or rough going and aren't fussed about stiles as we think if you're up a decent walk you should be able to cope with a stile! The kissing gates on the green are fine but more kissing gates wouldn't encourage us to walk more.

Jill and Jean, aged 94

FOOTPATHS ON FARMLAND

The main things that concern farmers about walkers are leaving gates open, dropping litter and not picking up dog faeces. Even if a field does not appear to have livestock in it, the gates are closed for a reason. Please be sure to leave gates as you find them.

Many people are under the impression that they only need to remove dog faeces from public places. However, it is important to remove it from farmland. Neospora is a parasite carried by some dogs and Neosporosis, caused by infected faeces being left on grazing land is the biggest cause of abortion in cattle, after which the animal will



have reduced milk yield and experience fertility problems. Further information can be found in a Countryfile article from 2014.

Most farmers welcome responsible footpath users who can be helpful to farmers by reporting escaped animals or flytipping.

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Of Mowers and Men

It's the same every year. The sun peeps out. The grass springs up. The mower is retrieved from the back of the shed. You check the oil, add some petrol, and give the starting rope a long confident pull. Nothing happens. You push the choke fully on and tug again. Nothing. You ease back on the throttle and ... well you know the result.

Shortly afterwards you are to be found at the service shop armed with your second mortgage and asking the nice man how long it's likely to take. And it's always the same answer. "Well, we're really busy now. The sun brings them all out. If you'd just brought it in a couple of months ago ..."

Oh, come on! Who ever thinks of servicing their mower in January?

So this year I thought I'd circumvent all that. My trusty old Stoic Landmaster that's given sterling service for a quarter of a century was playing up last summer. So I decided to grasp

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the nettle and go for a replacement. Google soon found the machine I wanted. The price was eye-watering, but then if (and I accept it's a big IF) it lasts for 25 years, it will only cost a tad more than 50p a week. (Please don't remind me that, for at least half the year, it will be doing absolutely nothing in the back of the shed.)

Since no local store sells it, I order online. Then I get the call. "Sorry it's out of stock. And the manufacturer says there's a four week wait." No problem there are other suppliers. But it's the same story. Out of stock. Month delay. Minimum. (Please tell me how on earth can a mower manufacturer not have stock ready for the start of the mowing season!!!)

But the sun's shining. The grass is growing. The trusty Landmaster is retrieved from the shed. Levels are checked. A long, confident pull on the starting cord elicits ... nothing.

I know everyone is entitled to a living. And I wouldn't want to be a mower mechanic. But really. How can they sleep at night with their charges? If I'd had the Stoic serviced every year of its life I'd have paid seven times its purchase price. But then I suppose if I'd had it serviced every year I wouldn't be watching the grass grow, waiting for the distant call of the mower man.

Kent Barker

Wine Column

Sun-drenched Languedoc Wines come to Benenden

British couple Ruth and Charles Simpson have spent the last 14 years learning about, growing, and exporting wines from their Estate, Domaine Sainte Rose, in the Herault in Southern France.



It's part of the Languedoc-Roussillon region which covers a huge area, stretching from Provence to the Pyrenees. This sun-baked area feels like a country in its own right. It has been a strategic border since Classical times and is awash with historical reminders, from Roman aqueducts to hilltop Cathar castles. These days it is possibly best known for its vineyards, which produce a third of all French wines, as

well as the beautiful beaches sprawling along the Mediterranean coastline.

Domaine Sainte Rose is situated just outside the village of Servian. I know the region well, as I used to import wines from Domaine de l'Arjolle at nearby Pouzolles (www.arjolle.com, well worth a visit). In wine terms it's known as the Cotes de Thongue. This appellation covers wines made on the southern slopes of the Montagne Noire from 14 villages along the wide valley of the river Thongue.

Here follows a brief explanation of French wine 'Appellations'. Most specific is AOC (Appellation d'origine controlee) with rigid rules about grape varieties and blends. A much wider - indeed Europe wide - category is IGP (Indication Géographique Protégée). This category focuses on geographical origin rather than style and tradition, and gives winemakers greater stylistic freedom than AOC. In France IGP is still often known as Vin de Pays a category introduced in the 1970s. By 2000 there were more than 150 individual VDP titles, covering about a quarter of French wine production.

Vin de Pays - literally 'wine of the land' - is often translated as 'country wine'. It's divided into regional groupings - ie IGP/VDP d'Oc - covering the whole of the Languedoc. But it can have more specific local titles such as IGP/VDP Cotes de Thongue. Generally wine makers seek the most specific local classification they can obtain but - and this is the curious thing, not the Simpsons at Domaine Sainte Rose.

So, back to our wine tasting. Benenden's Martin Pexton met Ashleigh Keech, the Sales Manager of Domaine Sainte Rose, during a visit to the Barham village shop, and Ashleigh kindly agreed to come and present a range of their wines. This is the third wine tasting to take place in the café. All have been sell-outs, 36 people max, eight wines, a bite to eat and, on this occasion, a demonstration of the Tango at half time by local resident Chris Davies and his dancing partner Connie from Cranbrook. It is



somewhat surreal, but it works. And for around £10 a very enjoyable evening for is had by all.

Ashleigh has packed a lot in to her 27 years. She has travelled the world working as a chef in Michelin starred restaurants. She was recently manager of the Tenterden Majestic. She now looks after sales at Domaine Sainte Rose. She presented us with eight wines. I found it curious they don't sell any of their 30-odd wines in France and have opted for the more generic appellation of VDP/IGP d'Oc rather than the local VDP/IGP Cotes de Thongue. This, they say, gives them more flexibility with grape varieties. Petit Verdot is one of the six allowed grapes varieties in the production of red Bordeaux wines and turned up very unusually here in a blend with Mourvedre under the title of Les Derniers Cepages. Both varieties are indeed late-ripening. It was very popular, plenty of fruit and surprisingly fresh acidity, spicy, with ripe tannins, medium bodied, it was narrowly pipped into third place by the excellent Le Pinnacle Syrah. For me this represented the best value at £12.95. Full bodied, a dark chocolate and damson jam compote, would be great with cassoulet. There is 10% Viognier in the blend. First place went to the easy-drinking Les Deux Cesars rouge, a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvedre, one for the BBQ, no rough edges, bistro-style wine, good value at £7.95. The reds outshone the whites by far, what one would expect from this region.

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Look out also for the Simpsons' English sparkling wines. Ruth and Charles have planted 30ha of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier on the south-facing, chalky slopes of Barham, near Canterbury. The first harvest was 2016, we await the fruits of their labour, see www.simpsonswine.com.

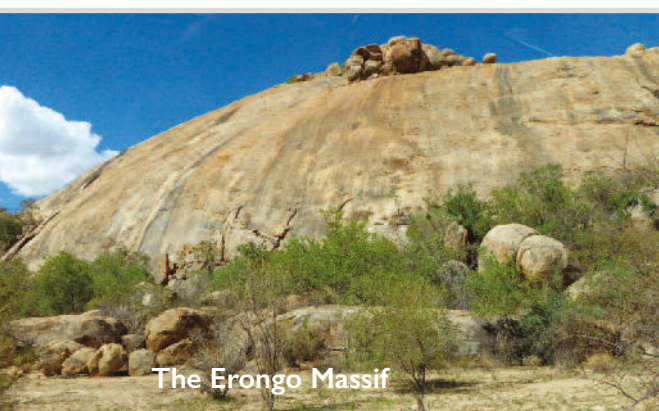
Voila. Thank you on behalf of Hospice in the Weald for £151 raised from the raffle. The next wine tasting will be on Friday 26 May, 'Wines for Summer Drinking', hosted by Nick Hillman of Wineservice and yours truly. We will show you a range of rosés, dry and fruity whites and reds for all palates. Charcuterie and cheese at half time, with maybe some more dancing!

Tracy Claridge TLClaridge@

TLClaridge.co.uk



Walvis Bay



The Erongo Massif

Bird Notes

Namibia Part 2. Walvis Bay - Erongo - Kaokoveld - Etosha National Park

Our route from the dunes of the Namib desert took us north to Walvis Bay crossing the vast, seemingly empty, gravel plains. I said seemingly, but not to our eagle-eyed guide. We hadn't gone far when he thrust his arm in the air and jammed on the brakes - he had obviously seen something unusual. On a telegraph pole was a Pygmy

Falcon, one of the world's smallest raptors, just slightly smaller than a Starling. As raptors go it was a pretty little bird with a grey head and back and a white breast extending up to the face and neck. A large reddish eye was a prominent feature. "A good bird" our guide expressed and one could not argue! In the featureless gravel plains we managed to find Namaqua Sandgrouse and Burchell's Courser. (Burchell was a British Naturalist who explored the area in 1810-15). Coursers are long-legged terrestrial waders and the Burchell's has a blue and orange crown with an orange breast leading to a white lower belly. Another "good bird" which excited our guide was a Karoo Long-billed Lark, endemic to the area. Karoo is a local name for semi-desert.

At Walvis Bay the temperature was like an English summer and we parked near a lagoon to enjoy a huge flamboyance of Flamingos (both Greater and Lesser) busily feeding by sucking up the saline water and filtering out the small crustaceans. It was fascinating to watch as they flexed their long legs rhythmically up and down whilst their beaks swayed from side to side. These beautiful birds were so close it was some time before I noticed others which all looked very familiar. Avocet, Greenshank, Grey Plover, Whimbrel, Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Sandwich and Common Terns. Remove the flamingos I could have been at Rye Harbour! It was strange seeing our summer visitors wintering in the southern hemisphere.

From the coast we motored inland in a north-easterly direction towards the Erongo massif. On the way we stopped and explored a dry riverbed. The first bird we saw was the beautifully green glossy Burchell's Starling which was quickly followed by a greyish parrot with bright yellow shoulder and blue rump and vents, identifying it as a Ruppell's Parrot. I expect to see parrots in a rainforest but in this arid area was a bit of a



surprise. We also had our first sighting of a Pearl-spotted Owlet which our guide was so good at imitating. It is about two-thirds the size of our Little Owl with pearl spots over all its plumage - an endearing little creature. Our lodge for the night was a luxury tent amongst the huge granite boulders of the Erongo mountains with vast cliffs bearing down on the site. An evening stroll encountered a lovely small Finch called a Green-winged Pytilia. The male has a green back, grey head, white breast with black bars with a bright red cap and throat. It looked as if it had just dipped his head into a tin of red paint! High in the granite cliffs there were Rosy-faced Lovebirds nesting in the cracks. This seemed a strange nest site for these close relations of parrots, particularly as they came up very close to our breakfast table the next morning. Our restaurant over-looked the watering hole but the chief interest was a Freckled Nightjar that looked and flew/swooped just like our own Nightjar. However their songs could not have been more different; whereas our Nightjar has a churring noise, the Freckled was quite melodic.

Our next stop was The Kaokoveld, a dry mountainous and relatively underdeveloped region where the plains between the mountains contain a good deal of large wildlife - still sometimes referred to locally as "game". The game drives from our lodge were in an open-air jeep which didn't seem much protection from the big cats! The drive passed a watering hole with carcasses of mountain zebra - presumably this was a good ambush place for the lions. The rains had not arrived in the area at their usual time and the poor zebra were desperate enough to risk this exposed hole. The water attracted a number of waders including the very smart Blacksmith's Plover and the smaller Three-banded Plover. The plains were well scattered with Mopane trees, a favourite for elephants, and judging by some of the damage they had been through quite recently. Past the watering hole we came across a lioness with three well-grown cubs. They took very little notice of us and we got very good views.

Our next stop was the Etosha National Park, Namibia's premier wildlife reserve, and at our first stop at a watering hole a large bull elephant wandered in and had a good drink whilst we were in a hide close by. European Swifts with the odd White-rumped Swift were wheeling in some numbers over the water adding to the scene of tranquility. At these watering holes in the park we saw a lot of animals coming into drink with herds of zebra and wildebeest accompanied by Woolly-necked and Abdim's Stork together with African Jacana (Lily Trotter). Our stopover night overlooked another watering hole where, at dusk, we were very surprised to see four black rhino (with horns attached) come to drink. I was under the impression that they were very scarce. Poaching is still a major problem here highlighted with a picture in the local newspaper of an adult white rhino slaughtered for its horn.

At both here and nearby Kaokoveld there were plenty of wild animals, mainly springbok, which suggested a balanced ecosystem between prey and predator. Leopard and cheetah are both present but we did not encounter them.

Charles Trollope 240821 cetetal@btinternet.com

from top: Pygmy Falcon, *Polihierax semitorquatus*; Burchell's Courser, *Cursorius rufus*; Ruppell's Parrot, *Poicephalus rueppellii*; Blacksmith's Plover, *Vanellus armatus*



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Foot Notes

Hyde's Hikes: Rye Harbour Nature Reserve & Camber Castle

Distance: 8 or 5 miles

This walk takes in a large part of the coastal nature reserve, shingle banks and bird hides (see Charles Trollope's notes on page 36). The walk then continues into the open grassland and rivers around Camber Castle. The terrain is very flat and easy going. The longer walk only climbs a total of 153 feet.



1) Park in the free car at the end of Harbour Rd, take the tarmac track straight ahead of the visitor centre on the edge of the car park. The path runs close to the edge of the river Rother as it enters the sea. It is worth stopping at the Lime Kiln cottage visitor centre where there is an information board with details of birds you might see on the walk.

2) As the path nears the sea there is an old World War II observation post on the left, turn right here along the path past the old lifeboat station.

3) After about 1.5 miles, there is a new sea defence of gabions filled with large rocks, shortly after this and before the road speed marker post turn right along a path heading into the shingle.

4) After 1/3rd mile the path reaches a crossroads, carry on ahead on the shingle path to do the loop around Camber Castle or alternatively turn right along the broad track and follow the instructions from point 9.

5) Carry on ahead cross over a stile, then through a gate across a field to emerge on a tarmac road. Turn right along the road and follow the track past Castle Farm to the Environment Agency site.



6) Follow the footpath through the field gate and carry on ahead with the drainage channel on your right. The river Brede soon appears on your left and views of Camber Castle built by Henry VIII on your right.

7) follow the path to the junction with the Saxon Shore Way and turn right heading across the field in the direction of Camber Castle. Once past the castle the path bears slightly right, as the path nears Castle Farm turn left on the path that runs alongside the fence.

8) After 100 metres turn right through a pedestrian gate and follow the path across the field in the direction of the house opposite. At the house turn left through the pedestrian gate and follow the path around to the right. At the T junction of paths turn left and follow the path back to the crossroads at point 4.

9) At the crossroads turn left along the broad track, follow this path alongside the gravel pits, past Watch House and the new cottages to emerge in Rye Harbour in a small new housing estate, carry on ahead to reach Harbour Rd and turn right to return to the car park.

Jim Hyde, Parish Footpath Co-ordinator

Bird Notes to accompany Rye Harbour Nature Reserve walk

Any walk at any time of year around Rye Harbour Nature Reserve will always have interesting wildlife, particularly birdlife. The varied habitat, shingle coast line, salt marsh, inland water bodies and reed beds makes sure there is plenty to see. As we are approaching the breeding season the remarks below apply to early summer.



Just past Lime Kiln cottage there is a hide over-looking the wader pool which is worth a visit where you should see breeding Redshank and Avocet. Avocet with its pied plumage and fragile curved beak is a wonderful sight. Breeding success has been limited, as the nearby gulls will predate the chicks. On the right as you look out of the hide amongst the grass mounds there is usually a pair of Wheatear, easily spotted when they make short flights chasing prey as they have a conspicuous white rump.

When you turn right (2 on Jim's map), look out for Little Terns on the shingle dunes, there are sometimes dummies to attract them to a safe nesting area behind the fences. This is one of only two sites along the South Coast where they breed.



Before reaching gabions (3) there are three hides, two overlooking Ternery pool and one looking east over the flat beach. Both Common and Sandwich Terns are breeding on the islands in front of the hides. However most of the breeding birds and noise will be Black-headed



Gulls but amongst these will be the Terns and the rarer Mediterranean Gull. Slightly larger than the Black-headed Gull the Mediterranean Gull sports a jet-black head rather than a dark chocolate coloured one and a striking bright red beak rather than a dull red beak. Lastly there is no black on the wing tips.

As you turn right (3) and go through the shrubbery keep an ear out for the lovely song of the Blackcap. If you have time when reaching Camber castle there is a hide over-looking castle water about 250 metres east of the castle. There is a gate in the fence leading to the hide. Although this hide is best in winter for waterfowl it is worth a summer visit for looking at Hobbies (small Falcon) hunting dragon flies. On the return path (9) the shrubs hold both Whitethroat and Sedge Warblers.

If you have time on your way to the car park along the harbour road park opposite Bournes on a bare bit of ground and go through a gate by their yard. Follow the path and bear left at the first grass junction and just before reaching a 'no entry' gate there is a path leading to a viewing ramp. Early in the morning there is a chance of seeing and more likely hearing the Bittern boom! Marsh Harriers breed in the reeds and Reed Warblers and Cetti's Warblers can also be heard.

Charles Trollope 240821 cetetal@btinternet.com

from top: Avocet, *Recurvirostra avosetta*; Little Tern, *Sternula albifrons*; Mediterranean Gull, *Larus melanocephalus*
Illustrations: Stephen Message www.message-wildlife-art.co.uk

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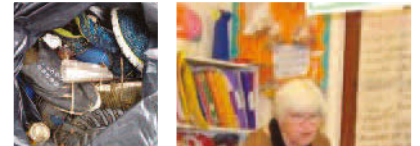
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Above: Tasting and tango in Benenden's Community Shop; collecting for the village Spring Clean; Benenden School's Chapel Choir performing at Queen's College, Oxford and the 1st Team celebrating as National School Lacrosse Champions; Benenden Primary School winners of the prized local swimming trophy, Welly Walking and with Archie in Pets as Therapy
Front cover: Tripping the light fantastic at Benenden's wine tasting. Photograph: Kent Barker